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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Baum's, the oldest family-run retail business in Illinois, opened by Henry Baum as a dry-goods store in Morris in 1874, and later operated by his son, George Baum, then his grandson, H. James (Jim) Baum, has closed its doors after 133 years in business; and

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WHEREAS, Jim and his wife, Carol Baum, kept the business successful not by keeping things the same, but by changing to keep current with the industry, evolving from an emporium to a moderately priced women's apparel shop; at one time, it was one of the largest women's specialty shops in northern Illinois outside Chicago; Jim was a partner in as many as four Hallmark shops around the State; at one time, the Baums had eight stores; and

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WHEREAS, The Baums have been retail visionaries, galvanizing interest in a comprehensive study of success and failure factors in independent retailing in the internationally acclaimed book, "Small Store Survival", and later leading a white paper study of independent retailing, "Challenges of the Future", underwritten in part by the Illinois Retail Merchants Association, the National Retail Federation Foundation, and the George H. Baum Community Charitable Trust; and

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1 WHEREAS, Jim and Carol Baum together have dedicated
2 themselves in just about every conceivable way to the vitality
3 of their hometown; Jim has been called the "voice of the
4 downtown business community" for his role as director and/or
5 chief executive for more than a dozen organizations, including
6 the Grundy County National Bank, the Morris Hospital, the
7 Grundy County Chamber of Commerce, and the Morris Community
8 High School Board; and Carol has served in the Presbyterian
9 Women's Association, Daughters of the American Revolution, and
10 the Morris Women's Club; both have served the First
11 Presbyterian Church of Morris; and

12 WHEREAS, An urban planner by training, Jim Baum has had an
13 active hand over the years in the development of the city's
14 downtown and Morris as a whole, serving as chairman of the
15 Morris Chamber of Commerce and member of the Morris Planning
16 Commission, as well as director of the Grundy Economic
17 Development Council; he also catalyzed the creation of the
18 Morris Community Trust and the Morris Downtown Development
19 Partnership, Inc., a comprehensive program to revitalize the
20 central business district; and

21 WHEREAS, Jim Baum served the retail industry, serving as a
22 director for IRMA, including a term as chairman, and as
23 director of the NRF; he was a frequent speaker on issues of

1 small store survival and the redevelopment of small town main
2 streets; and he is a co-founder of the National Small Store
3 Institute and a contributor of articles on issues confronting
4 small retailers; and

5 WHEREAS, Jim Baum was named NRF's Small Store Retailer of
6 the Year in 1993, and both Jim and Carol Baum were honored by
7 IRMA in 1997 as the Illinois Retailers of the Year; Baum's was
8 also named one of IRMA's "Illinois' Retailers of the 20th
9 Century" in September 2000; and

10 WHEREAS, The Illinois Retail Merchants Association will
11 honor Baum's as one of its 26 charter retail members during
12 IRMA's 50th Anniversary Luncheon on September 19, 2007 at the
13 Palmer House Hilton in Chicago; therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
15 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
16 congratulate the Baums for their longevity in business, their
17 dedication to the retail industry, and their service to their
18 customers and community; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
20 presented to Jim and Carol Baum as a symbol of our respect and
21 admiration.